

President's Report 2011

2011 turned out to be a very eventful year, including informal days out, there were over 10 events!

This must have been our busiest year, and in some senses, most successful as a club... Many new faces, Syncros and families came together throughout the year- all because of their Syncro ownership.

Of note again, there have been some major projects undertaken, some creating expedition capable Syncros, as well as several Westfalia resurrections and re-engine jobs going on.

Syncronauts Events

(NB. For more descriptions of any of these events, please see the Past Events & Meets Section of the Syncro forum <http://forum.club8090.co.uk/viewforum.php?f=48>)

Surrey Lanes in the snow

05 December 2010 (6 attended)

Early December's snow tempted us out with some new faces added into the mix. Although that weekend's snowfall would soon be on the thaw it was a good day and it all ended with a nice pint and a very strange coincidence soon after walking in the pub...now there's a story, to be told around a roaring campfire one night!

Coney Farm

2/3 Apr 2011

Again, some newcomers made it to Coney, a good sign for the coming year.

We know Coney well and as at most places it's best have to caution where to be careful, before rather than after the event, as it did get very slippery in places. Some very steep climbing was done, which not just impressed, but gave confidence to those new to driving their Syncro on the rough. Some particularly nice routes through the trees were found, and believe Al found one without an obvious exit ☺

The weather held, although thunder and lightning circled, with this early doors meet turning into a good chance for a barbie, chinwag and lost of parts swapping.

Coast to Coast

27 May 2011, Whitsun weekend

Originally The Syncronauts took on a random navigational challenge and treasure hunt over 3 days in 2007, organised chiefly by KevH, and Simon Baxter, which was really great success.

This time, seven or so took on this challenge, in two teams. Planned out by Neil Witt and Andy McClements it was intended as more of an off-road tour between the two

coasts, without the competitive element of yesteryear.

Apparently, there was plenty of action with a few breakdowns, a broken arm and no doubt other excitements. We are all still in doubt as to who finally made it to Robin Hood's Bay and who didn't. What isn't in doubt, is that everyone pulled together and helped those in mechanical trouble to get home safely, or to A&E if that happened to be their destination, so summing up, a triumph of team spirit.

Ireland (Eire Syncro)

10th~19th June 2011 (about 10 days, involving about 15 Syncros from 3 countries)

Paul, Dave and Andrew (Jebiga, Crankin and SyncroPad) organised (probably the first ever). International flavour Syncro Circuit of South Ireland. It was great success, with two set camps at set times, and a free-for-all tour of the country Before, between and after times, a sensible formula.

4 vehicles from England, 3 from Ireland and about 7 from France attended.

It was soon apparent that the French knew a thing or two about wild camping in style, with their market stall setting up on the first evening and appearing at surprisingly short intervals, with great wine, champagne, cheeses and Syncrobilia on sale at fair prices.

As expected, the weather was mixed, from lovely to quite dreadful. If you do go to Ireland, pray for good visibility, most parts are quite stunning.

PS. And the French know a thing or two about off-road driving too, though Paul introduced them to 'waffle boards and their usage in peat bogs'.

Syncropendence

2nd/3rd July 2011

This was well attended again (about 20), though sadly, as sometimes happens, one or two members failed to arrive due to unforeseen or mechanical problems. However, the weather was good and the children (both young and old ones!) spent a lot of time bridge-building over the stream adjoining the two lovely camp fields

Last year's winner, Aidan set up the German trial, using the campsite field this time. Early evening social nibbles and aperitifs proved a big hit. .We had a punch trial again.

And star of the show was Paul and Dave's Tinkerbelle, a converted 2WD single cab, which went both up and down 'The Rock' both forwards and backwards...(To redress that appalling misdemeanour they have volunteered to set up the German trial next year ☺) and the punch hunt.

Devon

6th/7th August 2011

Although less than ten Syncros came to the lovely Kentisbeare campsite this year, it proved as always, to be very convivial with much sharing and caring ! One striking

arrival was the Syncro Spong family, arriving 6 up in their nice Tdi Doka towing a caravan.

Some nice drives, SyncroSimon helped us a lot with some new TRF routes, so we mixed and matched days of touring and off-roading, with some very scenic routes. Hopefully a good balance between social, techie and offroadie was found, with the lovely Wyndham Arms being the rendezvous after every day out. Yes, we shall do the mill stream next year, honest...!

Picos d'Europ Mountains (and Liebana)

19th Oct 2011 onwards (some stayed nearly 2 weeks)

Rob Williams invited us down to his part of the world - the underrated Spanish Costa Verde, to assemble at his expansive pad, and head up to Potes, the Picos (Goat Cheese Land). Seven took up the offer, with Barry and Yvonne (DaveFriday) who live down in Murcia, Spain driving up to join the group.

Some took the (highly recommended) overnight ferry to Santander from Portsmouth; most travelled from Plymouth being more convenient. Allowing a day or two for chilling in the Santander region (fantastic beaches, swimming, surfing and sunbathing, even in October!), seemed a good idea for some, others arrived days later, after a stormy crossing and were soon all encamped at Potes, the mountain capital.

It is essential to hire a local Spanish guide, for driving the tracks in these areas, and *Albert* led the Syncros up to some really splendid high places, first in the Liebana (with stunning wee, self-contained altiplano villages, seemingly all having their very own micro-climate, and micro culture too).

Four days of driving, five good days of camping, dining and taking in the high altitudes, the flora and fauna. Rob's brother joined us as interpreter and raconteur, adding to the information gleaned whilst travelling through the hills and valleys. Lastly, a farewell dinner arranged by our guide, in a faraway place up in the Picos, ... fantastic four courses, and an introduction to the locals' very own prize winning cave-cured cheese – magic!

As was the ferry back to Portsmouth... leaving the Port of Santander in baking sun on Halloween, arriving back November 1st.

==A few informal meets took place ==

Salisbury Plains

12 Feb 2011 which Ady organised This gave an opportunity for several new and old members to meet. It started the year well and broke the ice.

Bordon Common

Roger invited a few Synchronauts to join him and his family at a heavy vehicles event on Bordon Common on the August bank holiday Sunday.

Cotswolds (4 vehicles attended)

30th Sep/1st/2nd Oct 2011

This was planned mostly by Peter Weide (Torchy) and Jenny Tyger using TRF tracks & routes. We found a nice campsite near Gloucester, a riverside pub with enormous grass campsite behind (a flood plain of course!)

Some very good tracks and very pretty places were driven through during this informal weekend. And the campsite was a good find... (esp. if interested in seeing the Severn bore)

+ some other informal outings were organised by individuals or small groups

Committee thanks

Doug Brett (Chairman) is standing down from the Committee and we thank him for his long term support of Synchronaut events, organisation and storage of equipment. We hope he will be able to resume Syncro activities in time.

Kev Horler (Secretary) is standing down from the Committee and again, we all hope Kev will pick up the Syncro chalice again in the future.

Many thanks to both these long standing committee members and officers of the club for all their hard work.

Russel Johnston is also standing down, as Committee representative for Scotland.

Many thanks for being there for so many years Russel, with your advice, encouragement and support at all times.

Thanks to the rest of the committee and officers for their continued efforts and to all those who attended our events during the year. Here's looking forward to a great 2012.